



Planned Parenthood of Metropolitan Washington, DC

**Testimony of Helena Hernandez
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Testimony in support of [Bill 5-23](#), Personnel and Human Resources - Prospective Employees - Health Care Privacy

Montgomery County Council Public Hearing, Tuesday, February 14, 2023 - Written Testimony

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony on this important piece of legislation. My name is Helena Hernandez and I am the Public Affairs Manager at Planned Parenthood of Metropolitan Washington, DC (PPMW). PPMW is the longest serving provider of sexual and reproductive health care in DC, Maryland, and Northern Virginia. PPMW provides health care services including but not limited to primary care, abortion, birth control, STI testing and treatment, vasectomies, and gender affirming care to nearly 30,000 patients in the DMV area every year.

I am writing in support of Bill 5-23, the Personnel and Human Resources - Prospective Employees - Health Care Privacy Act of 2022. Thank you Councilmember Luedtke for introducing this bill, as well as Councilmembers Albornoz, Balcombe, Friedson, and Stewart for your co-sponsorship and support of this bill.

Currently, before hiring a new employee, Montgomery County requires prospective employees to fill out a medical form with the Office of Human Resources - Occupational Medical Services. These forms are used to make sure that a prospective employee is physically able to perform the tasks essential to the job they are seeking. Among the questions on the form are if the prospective employee has been hospitalized in the past three years, if the prospective employee is pregnant, and what prescription medications and over-the-counter medications the prospective employee uses.

Bill 5-23 seeks to restrict the types of medical information asked of prospective employees on this form. Specifically, this bill would prohibit Montgomery County from asking any questions about reproductive healthcare, including abortion care, miscarriage, contraception, sterilization, pregnancy, or family planning. This bill protects prospective employees from invasive questioning and gives them privacy in their reproductive health care decisions, a right that people are slowly losing in other states throughout the country.

PPMW is committed to protecting the people of Montgomery County and their right to privacy over their sexual and reproductive health care information. I urge you to support and pass Bill 5-23 to allow for its swift passage by the full council.